

September 15, 2017



**RIVERKEEPER.**  
NY's clean water advocate

Postal Regulatory Commission  
901 New York Avenue NW, Suite 200  
Washington, DC 20268-0001

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POSTAL REGULATORY  
COMMISSION  
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

RE: Docket No. RM 2017-12

Dear Commissioners:

I am writing on behalf of Riverkeeper, a member-supported watchdog organization dedicated to defending the ecological integrity of the Hudson River and its tributaries, and to safeguarding the drinking water of nine million New York City and Hudson Valley Residents. I am also writing on behalf of our diverse and growing community of Riverkeeper constituents including our donors, members, volunteers, ambassadors and advocates. This includes all of the people who live on the Hudson, swim, boat, fish and recreate in its waters, as well as the 9 million New Yorkers whose drinking water we protect.

As a Membership Manager and fundraiser for Riverkeeper, I rely immensely on the U.S. Mail to raise critical funds and communicate with our members, supporters and other constituents. Without the mail, our fundraising would suffer severely and, as a consequence, so would our mission.

We simply do not understand why there is a sudden need to increase nonprofit marketing mail rates for the nominal benefit of commercial marketing mail. This would seem to conflict with the rationale of the law granting nonprofits a discounted rate in the first place.

As a practical matter, injecting unanticipated increases such as those proposed here by USPS will mean that our fundraising budget will not be able to keep pace with the increase in postage costs. The inevitable result will be a significant reduction in our use of the mail, a severe blow and reduction to our revenue, and, in turn, a considerable reduction in our ability to serve our beneficiaries.

If our postage rates were to increase, by 5%, for instance, and produce a corresponding 5% loss of revenue, this would severely influence our ability to uphold our mission to protect the river, our drinking water, and the watershed that gives life to the Hudson Valley. Respectfully, we ask you to consider this consequence.

Please do not change the current system for calculating nonprofit rates. Implemented by the Postal Service ten years ago, we see no pressing need for a change, especially not one that will negatively affect all nonprofits that rely on the mail to fulfill their missions.

Thank you for your consideration,

Kristie Nilsson  
Membership Manager  
Riverkeeper

# Riverkeeper Members Make a Difference!



## **Riverkeeper is a proud community of activists, scientists, advocates and members like you!**

Thank you for your support towards our shared vision: a Hudson River teeming with life, swimmable, fishable waters throughout New York City and the Hudson Valley, and clean, abundant drinking water supplies.

### **Be a watchdog!**

Riverkeeper patrols more than 5,000 nautical miles annually. We also rely on participation from our citizen watchdogs to report pollution, so we can work with law enforcement agencies to stop these violations. To submit a report call: (914) 478-4501 ext. 231 and send photos to [watchdog@riverkeeper.org](mailto:watchdog@riverkeeper.org).

### **Clean Water Advocates**

When we need to send a message to government or industry, Riverkeeper members turn out in force to rally, sign petitions, write letters and send messages to decision makers. We keep our advocates informed via email, social media and webinars on timely topics. You can take action today - visit [Riverkeeper.org](http://Riverkeeper.org) and click TAKE ACTION.

### **Volunteers & Ambassadors**

Our volunteers and Ambassadors work year-round to support our education, outreach, advocacy and administrative efforts. Volunteers are critical to our success because they amplify our work increasing our reach throughout the region. Our largest annual event, the Riverkeeper Sweep, engages thousands of volunteers in shoreline cleanups and other service projects at 100+ locations from NYC to the Adirondacks. For more information about our volunteer and Ambassador programs, contact [volunteer@riverkeeper.org](mailto:volunteer@riverkeeper.org).

### **Citizen Scientists**

Riverkeeper works with hundreds of citizen scientists throughout the Hudson River watershed to identify where and when the water meets federal safe swimming guidelines. To check the condition of the water near you, go to: [www.riverkeeper.org/water-quality](http://www.riverkeeper.org/water-quality).

**Follow us on:**  Instagram  Facebook  Twitter

*For questions about Membership contact:*  
(914) 478-4501 x243 / [membership@riverkeeper.org](mailto:membership@riverkeeper.org)

[www.riverkeeper.org](http://www.riverkeeper.org)